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H. CON. RES. 22

Expressing the sense of the Congress with respect to contraception and infertility.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 25, 1993

Mrs. SCHROEDER (for herself and Ms. SNOWE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress with respect to contraception and infertility.

Whereas the incidence in the United States of both unintended pregnancy and abortion is substantial and unacceptable;

Whereas there is a significant incidence of infertility in the United States;

Whereas studies estimate that 31,800,000 women nationwide are at risk of unintended pregnancy, and that, for a variety of reasons, 13 percent of these women are not using any form of contraception;

Whereas there is a substantial need for the development of new contraceptive drugs and devices, but only 1 private

pharmaceutical company based in the United States is conducting research toward such development;

Whereas, if a variety of safe and effective options with respect to contraception are widely available, significant benefits for women and their families accrue, including a reduction in the number of low-birthweight births and a reduction in the number of premature births, leading to a reduced incidence of maternal and infant mortality;

Whereas it is estimated that 1 out of 6 couples in the United States is infertile or fails to conceive within 1 year of deciding to have a child;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control estimates that 20 percent of cases of infertility in the United States are caused by sexually transmitted diseases;

Whereas cases of infertility resulting from sexually transmitted diseases are the most preventable of such cases;

Whereas, with respect to the problems of contraception and infertility, the obstacles to making an effective response to such problems are many and include a lack of consistent funding, the political controversy concerning abortion, the lengthy and complex procedures for the approval by the Food and Drug Administration of new drugs and devices, the costs of liability insurance for research and for the marketing of drugs and devices, and a shortage of scientists in the relevant fields; and

Whereas family planning is universally recognized as a human right: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress should—

(1) establish a program of research for the development of new and improved methods of contraception and new and improved methods of diagnosing and treating infertility, including the establishment of research centers for such purposes;

(2) provide adequate long-term resources for the program to ensure that the program is among the principal Federal research priorities and that the United States is a world leader in research with respect to contraception and infertility;

(3) ensure that Federal programs with respect to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases adequately respond to the role of such diseases in cases of infertility;

(4) ensure that the public is educated with respect to contraception and infertility, including education on new and improved drugs and devices;

(5) establish as Federal goals the development, by the year 2010, of—

(A) improved barrier methods to protect against unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases;

(B) new methods of contraception for use by men;

(C) a vaccine-like drug for women that prevents unintended pregnancy for a significant period of time without disrupting the menstrual cycle or causing adverse metabolic or cardiovascular effects; and

(D) new and improved techniques of diagnosing and treating infertility;

(6) require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to take prompt action to reestablish the Ethical Advisory Board (terminated in 1980) in order to facilitate research with respect to infertility;

(7) review the policies and procedures of the Food and Drug Administration to determine the extent to which the process of approving drugs and devices for use by the public, especially with respect to contraception and infertility, can be expedited with a reasonable degree of safety, including consideration of the role of conducting ongoing surveys and studies of the effects on the public of drugs and devices that have been so approved; and

(8) determine to what extent measures can be implemented by public or private entities to resolve liability issues regarding persons conducting research into, or marketing, drugs and devices with respect to contraception and infertility.

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